

# **SOCIAL SERVICES – WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TASKFORCE WORK PLAN**

---

## **STRATEGIC ISSUES**

Welfare-to-work mandates limited time on Temporary Assistance (public assistance). This requires that individuals become job ready, employed, and through job retention, families become self-sufficient.

## **DESIRED OUTCOMES**

A successful Social Services - Workforce Development Plan will result in:

- customers ready for training;
- customers ready for employment;
- customers becoming self-sufficient;
- customers able to achieve improved job retention in spite of personal crisis; and
- case management services which accommodate a population with changing needs.

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **1. How will the assessment process mesh with other phases of the welfare-to-work process?**

*Recommendations from the Assessment Subcommittee of the Social Services - Workforce Development Taskforce include assessment tools that are currently being utilized. They have identified some user-friendly instruments that are being piloted in certain Service Delivery Areas. The next step is to refer the Assessment products to the Education Taskforce for consideration by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. It is imperative that at all points of entry into the Workforce Development system there is acceptance of the final product. It will be a work in progress over the next year.*

### **2. How will the information be shared with the other partners?**

*The Unified Automation Taskforce is recommending linkages between existing systems. There are currently those linkages being utilized between co-locating partners at the One-Stop Career Centers as well as the satellite offices at county Division of Family Services offices. There is a priority commitment to expanding the information highway that will foster continuing customer focus with the understanding that this too will be a work in progress to accommodate changing technology.*

### **3. Will strength based assessment be a tool to build on?**

*Yes. The experience with Senate Bill 595 sites has demonstrated that working with families from a strength based perspective has increased family functioning thus enabling families to remain together. Continued monitoring of outcomes will be vital.*

### **4. What changes in Department of Social Services training will be required and how will it be coordinated with other partners?**

*The Training Subcommittee is represented by all partners in the new Workforce Development System and includes the Missouri Training Institute. They are the Divisions of Family Services, Child Support Enforcement, Employment Security, and Job Development and Training. The Subcommittee recommends that all should be coordinated between partners and available through trainer led infoshares, peer to peer, local training teams, job*

*sharing, video, teleconferences, policy specific training units, and would include professional development tracts for all levels of employees.*

**5. What should be the role of the self-sufficiency case manager during the first 12-18 months of employment of the external customer?**

*The Subcommittee is recommending that all customers have case management services continued for at least 12 months after employment. The functional nature of the case manager will change depending on the intensity of the need for case management services for job retention.*

**6. What specific assessment tools will be necessary to begin the process with current welfare recipients?**

*There are tools now being utilized and discussion about the differences between screening and assessment will continue as more experience is gained and the Division of Workforce Development matures. The commitment remains one of customer centered services.*

**7. What role will the family play in the development of the plan for self-sufficiency?**

*The family remains the focus of the plan development and will continue to be an integral part of the process as benchmarks are set and achieved. Modifications will be required when and if benchmarks are not reached.*

**8. How will cultural competency be included and then measured?**

*The Cultural Change Subcommittee chose to focus on those issues that ultimately affect the customer who receives services from a collocated center. They defined culture as a component of everything that identifies us as a society with distinct methods of how we react to situations and how we communicate. For cultural change to occur there must be mutual understanding of language, behaviors, and values of all parties involved.*

**9. What role will local community resources have in the training as well as the case management of the family?**

*The Training Subcommittee has recommended that specified training should be locally based and customized to local needs. That would include sharing training responsibilities with local trainers. The case management functions that wrap around a customer will best be served by a team of well-trained professionals representing both state and local entities.*

**10. How will the assessment impact those that have been sanctioned and work with them especially if they have been part of a lucrative underground economy?**

*The issue of sanctioning was not addressed by any of the Subcommittees in a formal way. It is a consideration that has many facets and should be referred to a higher level within the Department of Social Services.*

**11. How will the self-sufficiency case manager interface with the One-Stop process once the customer has moved to the next phase?**

*Assuming that the customer has gained employment, the Division of Family Services case manager will follow that customer from wherever the case manager is stationed. The recommendation from the Taskforce is that the definition of case manager is: a partnership between an external customer and a broker of services to achieve agreed upon goals leading to job placement and ultimately sustained independence for the external customer.*

*This language appears to be consistent with the definition of case management within the Workforce Investment Act.*

**12. At what point does the Division of Child Support Enforcement case manager prevail if employment is gained and dollars are flowing between the custodial and non-custodial parents?**

*This question applies to Parent's Fair Share and discussions are still in progress between the Divisions as to the appropriate role for the case managers who represent both parents but whose focus is on the same children.*

**13. What role does peer mentoring play in the initial phase of the welfare-to-work process?**

*The Sustained Independence Subcommittee chose to recommend development of community based services to create a mentoring process that would work with the case management team to assist the external customer / family to obtain and keep employment. It did not specifically address the peer concept. That can best be considered by the local community.*

# **SOCIAL SERVICES - WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TASKFORCE**

## **FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

### **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

The Department of Social Services has begun discussions relating to its' commitment to the Division of Workforce Development and is moving forward with the decision to contract with the new Division for areas of deliverables focused on eligible individuals who must move from welfare-to-work.

Five subcommittees representing 65 employees, most of whom were representatives of the Divisions of Family Services and Child Support Enforcement attended five meetings over the course of two and a half months attempting to understand the challenge of a new Workforce Development System, the current scope of the players, what were some recommendations that would be customer focused, and would achieve the goal of welfare-to-work.

Early in the process of the Transition Team work, Gary Stangler sent a letter to all Department of Social Services employees explaining the stated outcome, reassuring employees and inviting them to participate in the planning process. As a result of that letter, 63 individuals, mostly Division of Family Services and Division of Child Support Enforcement employees submitted their names for consideration.

In an attempt to accommodate all of them, the work of the Social Services-Workforce Development Taskforce was clustered into five subcommittees. The Subcommittees were Training, Culture Change for Collocation, Assessment, Customer Education, and Self-Sufficiency related to return on investment. An outside facilitator was recruited for each subcommittee to assist the group in staying focused since the time was short and also provide some continuity in process.

Each subcommittee looked at identifying a product or products for their work. They then identified the customer or customers to focus that product development around and then identified what the steps should be to achieve the goal. All of the subcommittees chose to do an inventory of what information was current around the product, then did surveys directed to one or both of the customer populations. The Subcommittee developed the survey questions and then individuals who had expertise in market research and / or customer satisfaction surveys helped direct the final end product. Each subcommittee member who had access to the population being surveyed agreed to take and administer them in a timely fashion to meet a specified deadline. Since the members of the Taskforce at large represented 41 counties, both rural and urban, it was agreed that representation of those administering the surveys mirrored the state to an acceptable extent. The goal of the survey work was to help develop the recommendations to the Workforce Development Transition Team and the final plan for the Governor's Office and the Legislature. In many ways, the surveys tested out assumptions made by the group. In the end, some of the assumptions were confirmed but in several categories, they were not.

The customer categories defined were external customer (current clients of the Division of Family Services' Income Maintenance) and internal customers (employees who work with the current clients). Several subcommittees looked at recommendations focused on both of the customer populations but, two did not. The Training Subcommittee worked on only internal customer issues while the Customer Education Subcommittee focused primarily on external customer issues.

The following documents are the final recommendations of each of the Subcommittees and are the basis for the Social Services -Workforce Development Implementation Plan.

### **STRATEGIC ISSUE**

Welfare-to-work mandates limited time on Temporary Assistance (public assistance.) This requires that individuals become job ready, employed, and through job retention, families then become self-sufficient.

### **OUTCOMES**

- Customers ready for training.
- Customers ready for employment.
- Customers able to retain job retention in spite of personal crisis.
- Case management services that accommodate a population with changing needs.

### **SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The focus for the new Division must be one of customer centered services. That must include:

- internal customers, those that are working with the external customers;
- those who are job seeking; and
- the employers who will hire the external customers.

With the One-Stop Career Center focus, the Division of Workforce Development must begin its work in a new way, one that focuses not on the goal of program but one of customer satisfaction and outcome development. The following represents the reports of the five subcommittees.

### **TRAINING SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Professional development and training should be encouraged and provided in equal measures. Professional development can be defined as acquiring and refining the behavioral skills necessary to assist a customer in the transition from welfare-to-work. Training can be defined as acquiring technical knowledge of rules and regulations that govern the way programs are implemented and administered. The initial interaction with the customer has a major impact on the success of the customer. Without employees having the appropriate behaviors and communication skills there may be a breakdown in the customer's success. In addition, without knowledge of agency and program rules and regulations, the employee cannot intelligently inform the customer of requirements in order to be successful and retain employment.

Based on survey results and needs assessments combined with the expertise and knowledge of the represented agencies staff, the Training Subcommittee recommends the following:

- Training and professional development should be a priority within all agencies through investment of time and funds.
- Employees should be trained prior to implementation of changes in policy and procedure.
- Certain training should be consistently provided throughout the State (ie specific to federal and state policies and procedures that are not open to interpretation).
- Certain training should be locally based and customized to local needs.

- All training and professional development should be available to all partner agencies all the time.
- Partner agencies should be cross informed on each agencies' services and policies which effect partner agency employee job success and / or effectiveness.
- Training and professional development should be available through a variety of formats such as trainer-led, infoshares, peer to peer, teleconference, Internet, local training teams, policy specific training units, job sharing, and job shadowing.

Members of the Training Subcommittee:

- the Division of Family Services;
- the Division of Child Support Enforcement;
- the Division of Employment Security;
- the Division of Job Development Training; and
- the Missouri Training Institute.

## **CULTURE CHANGE FOR COLLOCATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Cross training / cross information services available to provide partner service providers a shared knowledge of all area / community resources.
- Commitment to local customization – empowerment to make decisions on the local level – both management and field staff.
- Common intake.
- Common telephone system.
- Improved customer tracking through shared data – electronic linkage to partner telephone systems creating compatible and centralized access to all partner service providers, in a physically collocated center, with a shared receptionist and / or switchboard; as well as, secure access to relevant databases containing common customer information to allow:
  - 1) inquiry and update on a common intake document; and
  - 2) more accurate customer tracking to meet the Governor's Outcome Measures.
- Common geographical areas – even though this is listed under Products / Desired Outcomes, we realize the boundaries are set by other sources and this is not an area we can cause to change.
- Common commitment between all partners to include:
  - spirit of cooperation (listed under Attributes);
  - open communication (listed under Attributes);
  - willingness to address differences in language, behaviors and values – willingness to understand each others business language (listed under Attributes);
  - professionalism (listed under Attributes);
  - commitment to outcome based philosophy – all staff need to be working in an outcome based frame of mind from the first contact with the customer;
  - commitment to team approach – cooperation (listed under attributes);
  - positive attitude (listed under Attributes); and

- commitment to goal of welfare-to-work by all partners – customer service emphasized by this subcommittee.

Training around successful collocation should be customized to the specific type of collocation being proposed. Cross informing all partners must be the key step in the training process. The new Division of Workforce Development will create opportunities for successful coordination and ultimate integration as it continues the commitment to customer focused path.

Members of the Culture Change for Collocation Subcommittee represented:

- the Division of Family Services;
- the Division of Child Support Enforcement;
- Service Delivery Area Representative;
- the Division of Aging; and
- St. Joseph Workforce Development Center.

### **ASSESSMENT SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Any initial assessment process should record basic background data (name, social security number) only once during the process in order to eliminate duplication.
- Assessment partnership with education assessment should:
  - be holistic;
  - share all basic information among primary partners. This not only prevents duplication of effort but also allows each partner to know what has been previously evaluated so they can make a more knowledgeable assessment;
  - areas of assessment should be standardized for the collection of basic data. These areas might include a basic skills assessment, occupational aptitudes, and interests;
  - methods of assessment should be individualized and appropriate to the customers situation, ie written vs. verbal, TABE, etc.; and
  - assessment results should be discussed with the customer in person, with members from the primary partners present for the joint case management when appropriate. The customer should receive a written evaluation as well. The written evaluation should show grade level equivalencies for the educational assessment.

Members of the Assessment Subcommittee represented:

- Service Delivery Area 2;
- the Division of Child Support Enforcement; and
- the Division of Family Services.

### **CUSTOMER EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following principles represent recommendations for Customer Education Subcommittee, which should be referred to and integrated into the Public Information and Consumer Education Subcommittee of the One-Stop Career Center Taskforce.

- Commitment to job seeking customer who receives Temporary Assistance benefits for simple concise information that will create a road map for entering the Workforce Development System.

- Information that is developed at a sixth grade reading level and is easily understood by both the public at large and the job seeking customer.
- Commitment to consistent and timely updates to all agencies and partners within the Workforce Development System with emphasis at the collocated sites.
- Brochures and other A-V materials that repeat a consistent message distributed to all major sites that in some way serve any job seeking customer.
- Materials that are developed be incorporated into staff training with focus on FUTURES. Commitment to consistent and timely updates to all agencies and partners within the Workforce Development System. Each partner department should evaluate their customer education materials for potential update and innovation.

Members of the Customer Education Subcommittee represented:

- the Division of Child Support Enforcement;
- the Division of Family Services;
- the Department of Economic Development; and
- the Division of Employment Security.

### **SELF-SUFFICIENCY SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Sustained Independence (formerly referred to as the Self-Sufficiency) Subcommittee.

For any job seeking customer to successfully navigate the Workforce Development System, the availability of targeted, sustained, and consistent case management will be an important ingredient.

The Subcommittee has defined case management for the purposes of workforce development as:

- A holistic view of the customer, job seekers and employers, the agencies and the community that focuses on a partnership between an external customer and a broker of services to achieve agreed upon goals leading to job placement and ultimate self-sufficiency for the external customer.

The Subcommittee has defined case manager as:

- An individual possessing the ability to work in a team environment by demonstrating measurable attributes leading to self-sufficiency for the external customer.
- Case management should be available for at least 12 months after employment for the welfare-to-work customer. In addition bridges should be built within the Department of Social Services to improve services to the external client / family by:
  - Collocating the Divisions of Family Services and Child Support Enforcement employees in every county office and ultimately into the One-Stop Career Centers where possible.
- To better assist families, a priority must be to develop community based services to create or expand mentoring services that would work with the case management team.



- Customer satisfaction surveys will be done at specified milestone times which would allow for changes to be made in the plan both for the benefit of the customer being served and for the program now and for future planning.
- In order to obtain and maintain employment:
  - parents must have childcare that is reliable;
  - extended hours must be available that meet the needs of working parents including evening and weekend care;
  - available backup care for days when a child is sick, or the regular provider cannot provide care;
  - all effort must be made to ensure that childcare information is available to all partner agencies and their representatives; and
  - information on childcare eligibility will be included in the training for collocated partners and others as requested.
- Incentives, such as increased subsidies, for childcare providers who provide services that lead to school readiness.
- The creation of the Division of Workforce Development should support a transportation infrastructure plan for any job seeker.
  - Exploring some of the regional efforts underway, pilot projects such as the Bridges to Work pilot in the St. Louis region should occur.
  - Continued efforts by the Welfare Reform Coordinating Committee development of a transportation subcommittee should be supported.
  - Continued development of software packages that are designed to connect current workers with welfare-to-work customers should continue.
  - The Department of Transportation should be encouraged to become a partner in the Workforce Development System.
  - The Unified Automation Taskforce is working on linking existing between departmental and divisional systems for information sharing. Each department and division must assess their hardware and software technology capacity to allow for a successful transition and growth into the millennium.

Members of the Self-Sufficiency Subcommittee represented:

- the Division of Family Services;
- the Division of Child Support Enforcement;
- the Office of Administration; and
- the Communication Workers of America.

## **PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **DEFINITIONS**

Case management is a partnership between an external customer and Division of Family Services representative to achieve agreed upon goals ultimately leading to sustained independence for the customer.

### **ATTRIBUTES**

A case manager possesses the ability to work in a team environment leading to sustained independence for the customer through demonstrating the following attributes:

- the ability to communicate effectively with both internal and external customers;
- creative problem solving skills demonstrated;
- the ability to teach problem solving skills;
- knowledge of community resources;
- commitment to customer success;
- possess work values and behaviors that clients can emulate;
- the ability to motivate external customers;
- knowledge of labor market resources and makes customer referrals to the appropriate education and / or training resource to assist the customer begin the journey through workforce development;
- continues an active role in the partnership with the customer for crisis management as customer problem solving skills develop; and
- provides case management services which accommodate the changing needs of the customer.